

Bora language

Bora is an indigenous language of South America spoken in the western region of Amazon rainforest. Bora is a tonal language which, other than the Ticuna language, is a unique trait in the region.

The majority of its speakers reside in Peru and Colombia. Around 2,328 Bora speakers live in the areas of the northeast Yaguasyacu, Putumayo and Ampiyacu rivers of Peru. There are about 500 speakers of Bora also in Colombia in the Putumayo Department. Peruvian speakers have a 10 to 30% literacy rate and a 25 to 50% literacy rate in their second language of Spanish.

Early linguistic investigators thought that Bora was related to the Huitoto (Witoto) language, but there is very little similarity between the two. The confusion was most likely due to the frequent intermarriage between the tribes and the Ocaina dialect of Witotoan which has many Bora words.

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Bora	
<i>Meamuyna</i>	
Native to	Peru, Colombia
Ethnicity	Bora people
Native speakers	2,400 (2000) ^[1]
Language family	<div>Bora–Witoto <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boran<ul style="list-style-type: none">Bora</div>
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	boa
Glottolog	bora1263 (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/bora1263) ^[2]

Dialects

Miraña, a dialect of Bora, is spoken along the Caquetá-Japurá river which flows from Colombia to Brazil, and a few villages are there.

Bora proper has 94% mutual comprehensibility with the Miraña dialect.

Another dialect of Bora, *Murnane*, which has about a 50% comprehensibility with Bora and Miraña, is spoken along tributaries of the Caquetá River in central Colombia.

Loukotka (1968) lists these dialects of Bora:^[3]

- Bora (Boro) - on the Cahuinari River and in a colony in the village of Méria on the Igara Paraná River
- Imihitā (Emejeite) - spoken on the Jacaré River
- Fa:ai - spoken in the Sierra Futahy in the same region (poorly attested, only a few words)

Grammar

Bora contains 350 classifiers, the most discovered of any languages thus far.^{[4][5]}

Orthography

The written form of Bora was developed by Wycliffe Bible Translators Wesley and Eva Thiesen with the help of the natives of the village of Brillo Nuevo on the Yaguasyacu river. Wesley and Eva Thiesen's daughter Ruth is also the first recorded non-native to learn the language. First, Bora to Spanish school books was developed. Then the New Testament Bible was translated. Finally, a comprehensive dictionary and grammar book was developed to document and preserve the language's grammar rules. This has since facilitated more textbooks so that speakers can be taught to read and write in their language, rescuing it from extinction due to the prevalence of Spanish and Portuguese in the regions where it is spoken.

Phonology

	Front	Central	Back
Close	i	ɨ	ɯ
Close-mid			o
Mid	ɛ		
Open	a		

All vowels have long forms. Bora demonstrates contrastive vowel length.^[6]

Caption

		Bilabial		Alveolar		Postalveolar	Palatal	Velar			Glottal	
		plain	palatalized	plain	palatalized			plain	palatalized	labialized	plain	palatalized
Stop	plain	p	pʲ	t	tʲ			k	kʲ	kp	ʔ	ʔʲ
	aspirated	pʰ	pʲʰ	tʰ	tʲʰ			kʰ	kʲʰ			
Affricate	plain			ʈs		ʈʃ						
	aspirated			ʈsʰ		ʈʃʰ						
Fricative		β	βʲ								h	hʲ
Nasal		m	mʲ	n			ɲ					
Approximant							j					
Flap				r								

References

- Bora (<https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/boa/>) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)
- Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Bora" (<http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/id/bora1263>). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
- Loukotka, Čestmír (1968). *Classification of South American Indian languages* (<https://archive.org/details/classificati/onof0007louk>). Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center.
- "Bora" (https://web.archive.org/web/20150612103704/http://www.peru.sil.org/language_culture/family_jivaroan-witotoan/bora). Archived from the original (http://www.peru.sil.org/language_culture/family_jivaroan-witotoan/bora) on 2015-06-12. Retrieved 2015-06-11.
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- "SAPhon – South American Phonological Inventories" (<http://linguistics.berkeley.edu/~saphon/en/>). *linguistics.berkeley.edu*. Retrieved 2018-07-18.

External links

- Native Languages: Bora (<http://www.native-languages.org/bora.htm>) Aces. Feb. 2015
- A Grammar of Bora (<http://www.sil.org/about/news/new-publication-grammar-bora>)
- Diccionario Bora-Castellano (<http://www.sil.org/resources/archives/29959>)
- Datos Etno-Lingüísticos 1 (<http://www.sil.org/resources/archives/30099>)
- Textos folklóricos de los bora (<http://www.sil.org/resources/archives/30137>)
- Vocabulario ocaina (<http://www.sil.org/resources/archives/29982>)

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